

1 behind the rear door just before the rear tire well to permit step access to the bed of the truck or
2 the rear roof surface of a sport utility vehicle.

3 Figure 1B shows a preferred embodiment of the invention from a side view before being
4 mounted on a vehicle. Step assembly 28 is a U-shaped bar having two ends 21 connected
5 together by a central bar 27 that together attach to side bar 20 to form a step. The angle at which
6 ends 21 attach to central bar 27 may be of any of a variety of angles typically from 0 to 45
7 degrees to facilitate easy access by a human foot and a stopping point on either side of central
8 bar 27 to inhibit slipping and undesired movement of the person using the step. Ends 21 may be
9 of two different angles on one step assembly depending on the application. Attached to or
10 formed in central bar 27 is flat surface (flat bar 29 of figure 1A) to form a convenient location for
11 a foot to alight.

12 Figure 2 illustrates a side cross sectional view of the invention along the line A-A of
13 Figure 1. In the preferred embodiment, side bar 30 is welded to mounting bracket 32. Mounting
14 bracket 32 is bolted to the vehicle underside chassis 34 to stably secure the side bar below the
15 vehicle body (not shown). Step assembly 36 (consisting of the tubular bar and step previously
16 described) is welded to side bar 30 at an appropriate angle to provide an optimum setback from
17 the vehicle passenger cab and easy to access surface to assist in entering and exiting the vehicle.
18 Preferably, the angle should be approximately 45 degrees from the horizontal plane. There may
19 be applications where the angle could be anywhere from 0 to 90 degrees relative to the horizontal
20 plane depending on vehicle height off the ground and the particular use intended.

21 ^E
22 Figures 3A through ~~E~~ show each of the component parts of a preferred embodiment in
23 more detail. Figure 3A shows a top plan view of side bar 40. During manufacture side bars 40
24 are cut to lengths customized for each vehicle. After cutting side bar 40 to the desired length, the
25 ends are bent and stylized bent ends 42 and 44 created. One or both of the bent ends may be
removed as depicted on the left bent end 44 in shaded outline in the figure to achieve the desired
stylized effect. In the preferred embodiment the tubular bar is comprised of mild steel of 3 inch